

Late Backup

City Council 3/27/14 Needs Assessment of the Consolidated Plan

My name is Stuart Harry Hersh, and like most in Austin, I rent.

Every five years we have an opportunity to outline the critical needs of the poorest among us so that our federal and local investments can be a strategic path to success.

The poorest among us still need community development investment in early childhood development before their children enroll in school for the first time and in after school day care for children of the working poor.

The poorest among us need economic development investment in workforce programs that will assist hard working adults to move from a job at minimum wage to work at a wage that brings these individuals and parents out of poverty.

The poorest among us need S.M.A.R.T. Housing, not the dumb housing policies of the last century. And S.M.A.R.T. means:

1. Safe and sanitary
2. Mix of income in the neighborhoods where poor people may want to live
3. Accessible for people with disabilities
4. Reasonably-priced rents and mortgages
5. Transit orientation that make it possible for people with want to use public transportation to do so safely because their housing physically is located close to where they live and accessible public sidewalks are in place when housing is ready to be occupied

Our brothers and sisters in neighborhoods where their homes have been damaged by flooding may need additional assistance to either repair their homes or to relocate to a S.M.A.R.T. home.

The poorest homeowners among us need assistance in getting their homes repaired and visitable, and this may include appropriate regulations for expedited permits and accessible ramps long identified as a priority for the City Council but not necessary a priority or staff, boards, and commissions.

If we don't focus on all of this, we will end up with S.T.U.P.I.D. Housing:

1. Segregated by income
2. Tax burdened
3. Utility burdened
4. Plans for the affluent
5. Impediments to repair
6. Deteriorating homes

Please support S.M.A.R.T. policy so that we may avoid S.T.U.P.I.D. policy.

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